

disadvantaged, I cannot support a bill that preemptively acts before a municipality has an opportunity to develop its own policies. Some 30 States have either already drafted legislation concerning this issue or are working on legislation. It is unfair to invalidate State and local attempts to adjust, legislatively, to a Supreme Court decision just issued in June of this year.

The House should have spent more time developing legislation that was less intrusive on States' and local governments' sovereignty. For example, this bill could strip Federal economic development funding for two years from a State or local government that exercised eminent domain, even if the project taken did not receive Federal funds. All economic development funds, including those not involved with the condemned project, would be lost. Projects worthy of being built might be eliminated due to the lack of economic development funds. This can be disastrous for a local government's economic growth and sustainability. Local officials would be constantly concerned that exercising eminent domain could result in lawsuits and loss of funds.

I voted for an amendment that would have added some sense of fairness to the government's use of eminent domain, but it did not pass. The amendment, offered by Congressman MICHAEL TURNER of Ohio, would permit cities to continue using eminent domain to redevelop a Brownfield site. It also enumerated several instances where, for the public's health and safety, the government could use eminent domain when necessary to rid the community of a hazardous property.

I could support a bill that strikes a balance and is fair to State and local governments. This bill does not meet that threshold.

IN RECOGNITION OF DEMETRIS KASTANAS

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, November 7, 2005

Mrs. MALONEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the extraordinary achievements of an important member of the Astoria, NY community, Mr. Demetris Kastanas.

On February 18, 1968, Mr. Kastanas emigrated from his homeland Greece to the United States, looking for a better life and future in this country. Having worked a number of different jobs, including pumping gas and selling insurance, Mr. Kastanas managed to save enough money to open his first restaurant. A second restaurant soon followed.

As a successful businessman in his adopted country, Mr. Kastanas felt that he had to serve the community that had served him so well.

He was particularly interested in finding ways for Greek Americans to maintain a sense of connection to their motherland. On September 15, 1975, Mr. Kastanas launched National Greek Television, a weekly Greek television program on channel 47 WNJU. This is the longest running Greek television program outside Greece. In July 1983, Mr. Kastanas expanded to the Chicago area. It now airs in Boston, Atlanta, New Jersey, and other mar-

kets. In late 1999, NGTV bought its own Electronic News Gathering van to provide live coverage of important events.

As the expansion of cable channels created new opportunities for niche markets, Mr. Kastanas began to explore the possibility of an all-Greek cable station. His dream became a reality. In 1987, the Greek Channel began airing on the Time-Warner Cable system in Queens and Brooklyn. This channel was the first Greek cable channel in the United States.

Seeking new ways to cover issues of interest to Hellenes, Mr. Kastanas became interested in other media formats. He founded 'Eseis,' a biweekly magazine to address the interests of the Hellenic-American community. Eseis is the plural form of 'you' in Greek, reflecting the magazine's emphasis on serving the entire Hellenic community.

Through his television programs, cable channel, and magazine, Demetris Kastanas has given Greek and Hellenic-Americans a voice in the United States that might otherwise not have been heard. His tremendous leadership has been evident through his ability to organize rallies and demonstrations on the Cyprus issue that have communicated clearly the Hellenic-American community's strong feelings on this subject.

Mr. Kastanas's work has provided Hellenic-Americans with a connection to their homeland, through Hellenic news, folklore, music, and more. His programming has also helped new Hellenic immigrants assimilate into life in the United States.

He and his wife, Nomiki, continue to work and instill the best of the Hellenic American culture in their community, but especially in the youngest generation of their family: Matina and George.

Mr. Speaker, I request that my distinguished colleagues rise and pay tribute to a great New Yorker, Demetris Kastanas, for his 30 years of accomplishments. His many successes are a reflection of the vibrant and thriving community he so faithfully serves.

REFLECTING ON THE LIFE AND CONTRIBUTIONS OF FORMER ISRAELI PRIME MINISTER YITZHAK RABIN

HON. DEBBIE WASSERMAN SCHULTZ

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, November 7, 2005

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise to reflect on the life and contributions of former Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, who was tragically assassinated 10 years ago. Yitzhak Rabin dedicated his entire life to the cause of peace and security for Israel. He fought tirelessly for the right of all Israelis to live normal lives without fear of attack, to dine with friends, to shop, and to send their children to school on buses. Yitzhak Rabin was many things, a soldier, an Ambassador, a Knesset Member, a Prime Minister, and Nobel Peace Prize laureate. He is remembered best as a peacemaker who changed the course of history.

I In addition to valiantly serving Israel's armed forces for 27 years, including during the

War of Independence, the Suez War, and the Six-Day War as Chief of Staff, Yitzhak Rabin is responsible for leading Israel through many historic times. In 1975 he signed the interim agreement with Egypt which laid the groundwork for peace between Israel and Egypt. In 1976, Yitzhak Rabin ordered the successful liberation of the hijacked Air France flight, known as Operation Entebbe. And in 1994 Yitzhak Rabin and King Hussein of Jordan signed a peace treaty between Israel and Jordan. Most notably, Yitzhak Rabin's legacy includes the signing of the Declaration of Principles framework agreement between Israel and the Palestinians, and the famous handshake with the late PLO Chairman Yassir Arafat on the White House lawn.

Upon the signing of the Declaration of Principles on September 13, 1993, Yitzhak Rabin said to the Palestinians, "We say to you today in a loud and clear voice: Enough of blood and tears. Enough. We harbor no hatred toward you. We have no desire for revenge. We, like you, are people who want to build a home, plant a tree, love, live side by side with you—in dignity, empathy, as human beings, as free men . . ."

Clearly, this was a man who envisioned a free, secure, and democratic Jewish state at peace with all its neighbors. Yitzhak Rabin's message resounded across Israel, and it is no wonder that on November 4, 1995, he attended and spoke at a peace rally in Tel Aviv amidst tens of thousands of enthusiastic supporters with banners proclaiming "Yes to peace—no to violence." In his final address at the peace rally Yitzhak Rabin stated, "I have always believed that the majority of the people want peace, are prepared to take risks for peace," and "Peace is what the Jewish People aspire to, a true aspiration." Yitzhak Rabin was fatally shot by a Jewish student as he left the rally.

On the 10th anniversary of Yitzhak Rabin's death, I wish to express the deepest condolences of the American people to the family of Yitzhak Rabin and to all the people of Israel for the loss of this great leader. Additionally, we must honor his life and his work by continuing the pursuit of peace in the Middle East.

The United States and Israel share a special bond, one that Yitzhak Rabin helped to establish during his time as Ambassador to the U.S. This bond is steadfast and represents the abundance of shared values and common goals of our two societies. I am proud to be part of the U.S. Congress, a body which stands by Israel when Israel needs us. Just last week, the House of Representatives voted to pass the Conference Report of the Fiscal Year 2006 Foreign Operations Appropriations Act which includes \$2.3 billion in military assistance and \$240 million in economic assistance to Israel. Without a doubt, Yitzhak Rabin's legacy of bringing the U.S. and Israel closer together lives on.

Ten years after Yitzhak Rabin's tragic death, let us renew our commitment to fostering peace in the Middle East. We must encourage efforts that support the peacemakers of this world and penalize those who would murder innocents. Yitzhak Rabin has left a wonderful legacy over his long and distinguished career of service, and it is with the utmost respect and admiration that I support the people of Israel in their quest for peace.